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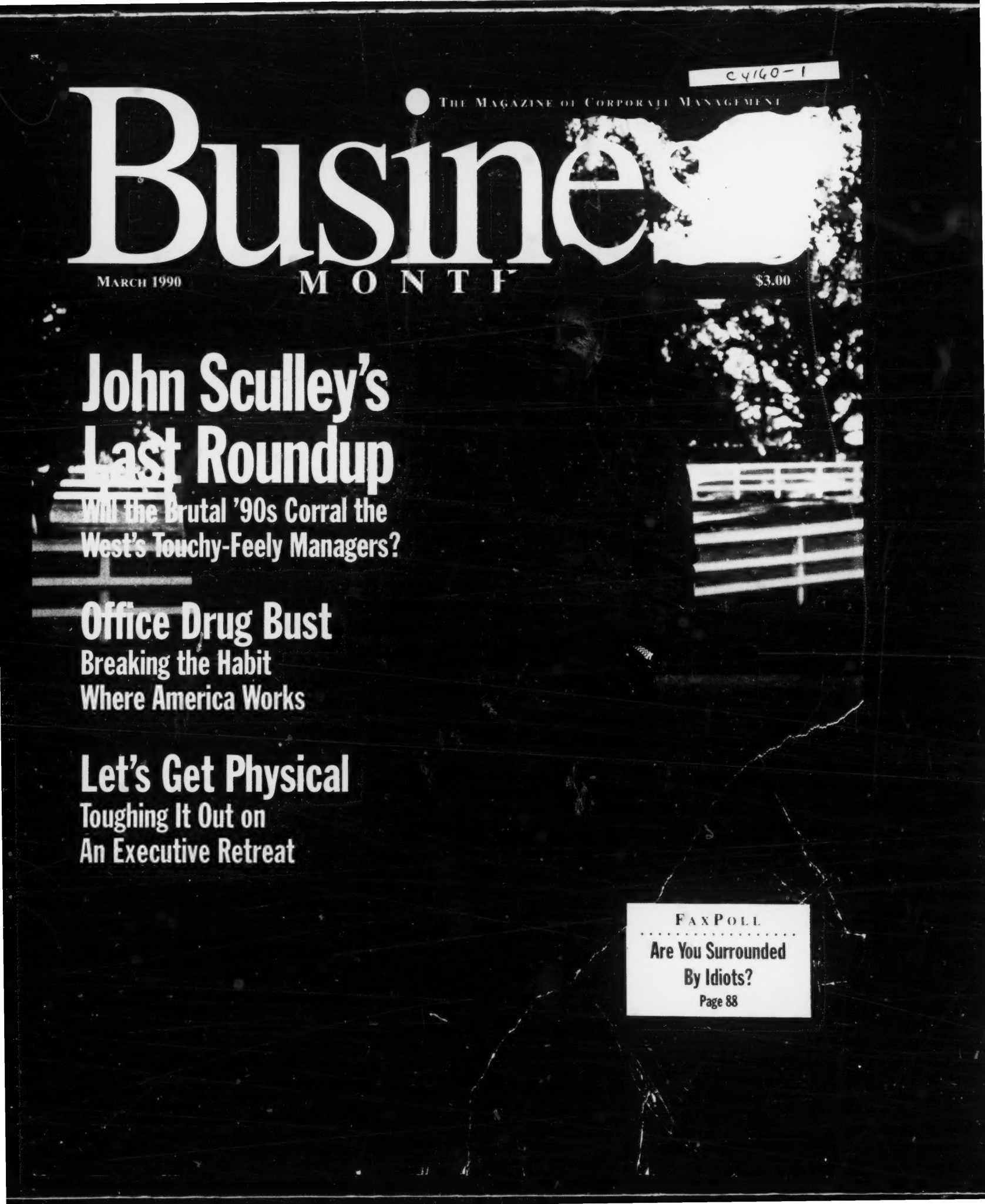

John Sculley's Last Roundup

Will the Brutal '90s Corral the West's Touchy-Feely Managers?

Office Drug Bust

Breaking the Habit Where America Works

Let's Get Physical

Toughing It Out on An Executive Retreat

FAXPOLL

Are You Surrounded By Idiots?

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Cover Photograph: Nigel Dickson

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John Sculley's Last Roundup

He went west and found feel-good management—leadership by inspiration rather than authority. Now, as the hard realities of the '90s begin to set in, Apple's John Sculley and his laid-back colleagues wonder if work can ever be fun again. *By James Kaplan*

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Office Drug Bust

In our November FaxPoll you said yes to testing—so we found a company that went cold turkey. Santa Fe Pacific's ordeal may change your mind. *By Tom Post*

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Is There Life After Pizza?

No longer hungry for Domino's, Tom Monaghan is obsessed with doing the next thing. You'd better not get in his way. *By Alex Prud'homme*

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Conquering Japan

How can American business grab a piece of the Land of the Rising Sun? For once, thinking short term may be the right answer. *By James Fallows*

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Let's Get Physical

Management just got muscles. On retreats across the country, executives are climbing and hiking in hot pursuit of team spirit. Can it work for you? *By Alex Prud'homme and Harvey Chipkin*

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For this executive headhunter, science beats a Rolodex

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The just desserts of a well-versed poet at Jell-O

FAXPOLL/88
Are you surrounded by idiots? Tell us what you think

but I will say that there are definitely parents out there that fit that description.

MICHELLE DAVISH
Oxnard, California

THE NEW AGEE REVIEW

YOUR COVER STORY ON BILL AGEE ("Born Again!" January) was factually incorrect in several instances: In 1979 Bill Agee was not a bachelor; he has never had a reputation as a playboy, as you so characterized him in your story. The Shuwa Corporation is a Japanese company whose primary business is real estate development.

By devoting so much space in the article to the eight-year-old Bendix experience, you may have unfairly deprived your readers of real insight into a warm, open, and friendly man. Bill Agee has provided the inspiration, leadership, and sense of team play that has turned this company around in record time.

JESS HAWLEY
Director, corporate communications
Morrison Knudsen Corporation
Boise, Idaho

I CAN CERTAINLY SYMPATHIZE WITH THE plight of poor Bill Agee. It must have been boring in Cape Cod without tens of thousands of lives to destroy. Having been through a plant closing, I am speaking from bitter personal experience. The mistakes of people like Bill Agee, people you laud as heroes, have been the direct cause of suicides, broken marriages, serious illnesses, sons and daughters of employees being forced to leave college, and lost homes.

Nowhere have I seen in your magazine any of this mentioned. At the very worst you lightly chide the offender, the person who came out of the disaster with a multimillion-dollar golden parachute to soothe his (imagined) wounds. And other companies are stupid enough to hire these "heroes" after they have destroyed their own companies.

These people are the ones that are handing the American market to the Japanese on a silver platter. The scorched-earth policy that is being carried out by American businessmen on American business is leaving a vacuum for the Japanese (or anyone else with basic business ethics) to move into unopposed.

JIM TRENT
Omaha, Nebraska

YOU'VE GOT OUR NUMBER

WE WERE MOST DISAPPOINTED TO LEARN that your FaxPoll telephone number is not reachable from Alaska. Without sounding sarcastic, I thought that I would point out to you that Alaska joined the Union a few decades ago and considers itself a bona fide part of this nation.

STEVE R. SMIRNOFF, APR
Anchorage, Alaska

We are happy to report that our FaxPoll number can now be dialed from all 50 states—even surfside from Maui.

DON'T DECRY WOLF

THE ISSUE DEBATED IN YOUR DECEMBER FaxPoll—a fast payoff for shareholders versus planning for the long-term growth of a company—is certainly valid in today's business atmosphere. However, the statement that Mr. Wolf was "ready to take on billions in LBO debt to give shareholders a fast payoff" is entirely inaccurate.

It is the continuing commitment to the long-term growth of United Airlines that caused management to consider debt of any kind. The debt that the board of directors and Mr. Wolf were willing to take on—only with extreme reluctance and few viable alternatives—was in the context of an employee-stock-ownership program and would have allowed the company to avoid the very real threat of a hostile takeover. The serious consequences of any new outside ownership of the airline would most likely have resulted in the selling of important assets and the possible loss of jobs and market share—certainly not in the best interest of the long-term growth of the airline.

Yes, the institution of an ESOP would have leveraged our balance sheet. However, it also would provide a tax-advantaged means to pay off the debt.

LAWRENCE M. NAGIN
Senior vice president
Corporate and External Affairs
United Airlines
Chicago, Illinois

Address letters to Letters Editor, BUSINESS MONTH, *488 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022. Or fax 1-800-766-7655. All letters must include the writer's name, address, and telephone.*

FaxPol

Does Japan own you? You're not quite sure. Many readers angrily say no but express resignation about the future. They seem torn between preserving America's independen and their own survival

If they're out to win your suppor the Japanese would be wise t build rather than buy in this coun try: 81.4% of you think that erec ing new factories is a good thing You oppose acquisition; it smack of taking without giving anythin back. Most of you can't abide th thought of Japan's buying U.S landmarks (75.7%) and existin companies (71.6%); and 61% o you don't want the Japanese ing anywhere near the banks. Som readers thought we missed the bos on this one, arguing that in a fre market, anyone should be allowe to buy anything. In that spirit, on reader compared Japan's buyout o U.S. assets to the deal the settler made to grab Manhattan. "It's th same way we treated the America Indians: We gave them trinkets; th Japanese give us VCRs and cars ... Let's just hope they put us o better reservations."

Feedback

77%
think corporate America is being shortsighted

You don't completely buy the story of Japan's legendary benevolence toward employees. Of the 54.6% who voted yes, nearly one-quarter claimed the Japanese were forced to behave decently, either to attract skilled labor (14.9%) or to comply with U.S. laws (9.6%). Those who checked off no complained of blocked career paths for U.S. managers (28.3%), second-class citizenship (22.9%), cultural differences (12.6%), and discrimination against women and minorities (7.2%). While a sizable 19.5% wrote in Don't Know, a few expressed ambivalence by checking off *both* yes and no. Wrote one: "Yes, because they pay them well; no, because they remove Americans from the decision process."

FaxPoll

WAKE UP! CAN YOU SMELL THE *SAKE*?

1. Is corporate America being shortsighted in selling its assets to Japan?
2. Are the following types of Japanese investments good or bad for the U.S.?
3. What can we gain most from Japan's presence in the U.S.?
4. What is the chief drawback of so much Japanese ownership?
5. Do Japanese companies in the U.S. treat their American employees fairly?
6. Would you work for a Japanese boss?
7. Would you support any of the following restrictions on Japanese investment in the U.S.?

You're not lining up to serve the Rising Sun: 29.2% said no way would they work for a Japanese boss; 32.4% ticked off Don't Know; and 38.4% claimed they'd do it. But these results seem to mask a deeper struggle of pragmatism and principle. Nearly a third of those who couldn't bring themselves to say yes still conceded that Japanese companies treat U.S. workers well. And 27.3% of those who'd said they would work for a Japanese boss complained, on principle of course, that we're losing our national pride.

Japan's presence here can't be *all* bad. A lot of you see it as a challenge to strengthen our own industrial might: 59.2% think we gain by being goaded into improving quality. In your eyes, that's a far more important benefit than Japanese money (25.1%) or management techniques (12.8%). A few saw only a downside. Suggested one: "We should welcome them with open arms, and just when they think they've got control—nationalize! Consider it a kind of economic Pearl Harbor, only this time *we* pull off the surprise attack."

77%
SUPPORT MAKING SOME INDUSTRIES OFF-LIMITS

71%
SUPPORT LIMITING INVESTMENTS TO MINORITY INTERESTS

17%
SUPPORT BANNING ALL OWNERSHIP

Japan inspires fear— much of it exaggerated. Nearly two-thirds of you (62.3%) said the biggest drawback to Japanese ownership was ceding control of our economy. You must have forgotten that at $5.3 trillion, our GNP is nearly twice the size of Japan's. Your second biggest nightmare is losing our national pride (21.7%) and our cultural identity (0.8%). Only 15.6% fretted about a *real* threat: giving away strategic technologies.

FEBRUARY FEEDBACK PREVIEW

TRASHING THE POLLUTERS

Mother Earth has many anguished children among our readers. And quite a few of them seem eager to dump on their own companies. Who should bear the cleanup costs? So far, it's Uncle Sam and the shareholders. How should offenders be punished? We'll have the full account next time. For now, are you surrounded by idiots? See page 88.

THE MARGIN OF ERROR IS PLUS OR MINUS 3.3 PERCENTAGE POINTS

Gioia published prolific quantities of literary criticism and edited poetry for *Inquiry*, a now-defunct biweekly. But he was wary of sending out his poems to magazines. As a student at Stanford, he felt poetry editors were bypassing his best work in favor of more mainstream selections. "I didn't want that pressure," he says of his early work after college. "I wanted to write in my own voice."

Finally, in 1982, he snapped his self-imposed silence—and almost immediately his meticulously crafted verse began appearing in the *Hudson Review* and other leading literary quarterlies. Soon Howard Moss, then the poetry editor at *The New Yorker*, asked to see his work, and Gioia's second career was quickly born. "I didn't have to play in the minor leagues," Gioia says.

For the next two years, Gioia *really* led a double life. At General Foods' corporate headquarters in White Plains, New York, he tried his best to keep his metrical moonlighting a secret. "I didn't want anyone to know I wrote poetry," he says. "I liked the privacy that gave me." Then Gioia was cited in *Esquire* magazine's 1984 Register—a listing by the editors of 272 influential men and women under age 40. The article blew Gioia's corporate cover.

Today, with his distinct identities out in the open, Gioia focuses on balancing his business days and literary eves, a task requiring as much discipline as energy. "I used to run four miles a day in college," he says. "After two miles I was exhausted, but I pushed and pushed myself, and there would be this breakthrough. I thought I could go on forever. I've trained myself to have that second wind at night."

In the poetry world, you know you've made an impact when your work has been not only enthusiastically reviewed but just as zealously denounced. In the *Northwest Review*, one of numerous little magazines in which literary combatants square off, the poet Greg Kuzma caused a stir with an attack last year on Gioia's writing, calling it "the poetry of privilege" and "the poetry of money."

But as a spate of protesting letters to the *Review* suggested, Gioia's ties to commerce may be as much an asset as a liability. And they're hardly novel: He joins a long line of poets who made their living in the corporate world, including Wallace Stevens, a vice president with Hartford Accident and Indemnity, and T.S. Eliot, a foreign-exchange correspondent with Lloyds Bank in London.

Indeed, Gioia has turned this connection to his advantage. A sentence from one of his several essays on business and poetry could serve as his credo: "I have tried to write truthfully about the actual daily lives people lead in America—even when the resulting subjects were ones that poets were not supposed to celebrate." So while he would just as soon write "old-fashioned love poems," what is most distinctive about Gioia's poetry is precisely what Kuzma objects to: its engagement with the material world of profits and losses, offices and suburbs. In the poem "In Cheever Country," he writes: "Somewhere upstate huge factories melt ore, mills weave fabric on enormous looms, and sweeping combines glean the cash-green fields. Fortunes are made. Careers advance like armies."

Gioia wisely separates his corporate days and literary nights. "People admire the versatility and the imagination," he says. "But would you want a poet running your business?"

Gioia is a leading figure in the movement known as the new formalism, which puts its stock in traditional poetic devices, rhyme, and meter—in contrast to the free verse associated with creative-writing workshops. "Two generations of younger writers have largely ignored rhyme and meter," he has said. "Why shouldn't a poet explore the full resources the English language offers?"

Strive as he might to keep his life compartmentalized, Gioia the poet can't help having some connection to Gioia the businessman. At the office, he's made his literary bent felt through Jell-O's Reading Rocket, an award-winning child-literacy program aimed at fourth graders. And he has put his managerial expertise to work in the literary world, both as an informal adviser to several small presses and in his seat on the board of directors of Wesleyan University's Writers' Conference. Thanks in part to Gioia's ability to recruit interesting speakers, the week-long conference has become one of the country's best, with an emphasis on nonfiction that distinguishes it from other summer writing programs.

In fact, Gioia's commitment to General Foods may be indirectly helping him with his poetry. Corporate success ensures his freedom to write; he can disregard changing poetic fashions as perhaps his publish-or-perish campus counterparts cannot. His knowledge of business also affords him a wealth of unusual material for his poems.

And his immersion in the world of getting and spending has deepened his convictions about his craft. "Poetry must continually enlarge its sympathies and concerns [and find] beauty where it has been overlooked," Gioia says. Clearly, this two-career man demonstrates that a literary sensibility can find plenty to nourish it in the heartland of commerce. ■

David Lehman, a former Newsweek *book critic, is series editor of the annual* Best American Poetry *anthology.*

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